

characterization and biodegradation studies on cellulose acetates with varying degrees of substitution", Polym., 38 (12) : 3045-3054. Said deacetylation may further be performed by methanolysis, for example, according to Buchanan C.M., (1991): "Preparation and characterization of cellulose monoacetates : the relationship between structure and water solubility", Macromol., 24 : 3060-3064.

*B1
Concl*

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 1, with the following rewritten paragraph:

B2
--Example 1: Preparation of cellulose sulfoacetates--

IN THE CLAIMS:

Amend claim 1 as follows:

1. (amended) Process for directly producing a blend of water soluble cellulose sulfoacetate derivatives through esterification of a cellulose material, comprising the steps of:

(i) suspending the cellulose material in a solution containing glacial acetic acid and eliminating the excess acetic acid,

(ii) suspending the cellulose material swollen with acetic acid from step (i) in a mixture of sulphuric acid solution and glacial acetic acid, and

(iii) reacting the cellulose material by adding the acetic anhydride, characterized in that: